SUCH FOLLIES ARE.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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LETTER I.

YOU have long known, my dear Eugenius, my utter deteſtation of thoſe Ariſtocratical principles which would reduce the bulk of mankind to a ſervile awe of the hereditary privileges and honours of a few—ſurely, of all the ridiculous notions which have ever

agitated the human brain, the pride of blood is the moſt contemptible. To ſee a ſet of individuals claiming pre-eminence over the reſt of their ſpecies, merely from the adventitious circumſtance of family deſcent, abſtractedly from *any* regard to talents or virtue, is enough to move the riſibility of a Philoſopher, while with indignation he beholds thoſe truly valuable members of ſociety—the farmer—the mechanic—the manufacturer—who ſeverally furniſh the ſubſiſtence and convenience of theſe little great people:—And, finally, the merchant, whoſe labours give value to their acres, apparently

apparently conſidered as a race of beings unworthy to inhale the common air of heaven.

When that politic Prince, Henry the Seventh, procured the paſſing an Act, which empowered his Barons to alienate their lands, he did that eſſential ſervice to his country which probably no man in the kingdom at that time, beſides himſelf, fully comprehended the nature of. That meaſure which gave a fatal blow to the pernicious power of Ariſtocracy, laid alſo the baſis of our national grandeur, and made way for the liberty and comfort of all orders of ſociety.

The various walks of civilized life afford nōt a more eſtimable character than the man, who, by honeſt induſtry, in his line of trade, attains to the poſſeſſion of affluence—in the courſe of ſuch application he has diſſeminated bread to thouſands, cheriſhed induſtry, and contributed to the comfort and riches of the whole community. At length, having honorably acquitted himſelf of the portion of labour, appointed primarily to mankind, he ſits down in the evening of life to enjoy a well earned eaſe, and render his wealth a bleſſing to all within his ſphere of life. Such inſtances give a pleaſing

pleaſing importance to that reſpectable body of Engliſhmen, called the middle claſs, and which, in fact, forms the ſtrength and glory of the State.

During the viſit which I have this ſummer made in D——ſhire, I have had an opportunity of informing myſelf, in ſome particulars, relative to two families which lately reſided in this neighbourhood; and, as they may ſerve to illuſtrate ſome obſervations you and I have frequently made, it is my intention to preſent them to you in form of a hiſtory, which ſhall hereafter

compoſe a ſeries of letters, not totally I hope devoid of amuſement.

Some years ago a valuable eſtate in this part of the world, formerly belonging to a branch of the B—— family, was purchaſed by a Mr. Hanbury, who at that time was juſt retired from buſineſs, with a ſplendid fortune, which, with the higheſt reputation to himſelf, he had acquired by a thirty years ſucceſsful application to the mercantile profeſſion. Mr. Hanbury was a perſon of ſuch diſtinguiſhed ability and virtue, that many, who, by a contracted habit of thinking, are unable to ſeparate the idea of

merit from that of rank, have endeavoured to trace his deſcent, at leaſt from ſome collateral branch of an ancient family. He himſelf, however, was always particularly anxious to refute any ſuch concluſion, and indeed, as his father was nothing more than the vicar of a ſmall pariſh, the queſtion appears decided beyond all diſpute; for when it is conſidered, that in order to acquire eccleſiaſtical preferment, the only qualification requiſite is frequently no more than the bearing ſome degrees of conſanguinity to a nobleman, or even to a nobleman's valet de chambre, it may be preſumed he was no way related,

or remotely connected with nobility.

Doctor Hanbury was a man of profound learning and eminent virtue. In the discharge of his pastoral duties he acquitted himself with truly apostolic vigilance, and will be thought no mean imitator of the Spartan system, when it is known he supported a wife and three children on the narrow stipend of seventy pounds per annum. As it was all he could do towards the future establishment of his offspring, he resolved to spare no pains in giving them a liberal education, which indeed he was enabled

abled to do at a cheaper rate than many parents, as he poſſeſſed not only a ſcientific knowledge, but alſo a pretty general acquaintance with the world as well as books. The eldeſt ſon only, whoſe character has been ſlightly touched, lived to reward his paternal care. He was a lad of good natural parts, and theſe ſo well cultivated, by the diligence of a fond father, that, at the age of eighteen, young Hanbury united all the advantages of refined education to a diſpoſition the moſt urbane and benevolent. The good divine, whoſe piety was of the pureſt kind, had taken care to ſtore the mind of his ſon with

true principles of religion, which he hoped (and not in vain) would prove the beſt regulator of his conduct through life, in which he knew not what his ſituation might be—" But whatever it be, George (ſaid he), a reference to your bible will always ſteer you right through a thouſand temptations, and be of more effect in regulating the paſſions than all the volumes of ethics which ever were penned."

The Doctor ſo highly revered the ſacred function, that he could have wiſhed it the choice of his ſon, but to this the diſpoſition of young Hanbury by no means accorded;

corded; he inclined rather to trade, but without the ability of advancing a requiſite premium—how was the knowledge of that to be obtained. Fortunately, the Doctor's lady had a diſtant relation, eſtabliſhed in the mercantile line, and though for many years the tie of conſanguinity between them ſeemed to have been forgotten, a letter on the preſent occaſion revived ſome recollection thereof—in fine, George was admitted into the compting-houſe of this relation, and ſoon diſcovered ſuch qualifications as induced the merchant at length to give him a ſhare of the buſineſs. After ſome few

few years, finding his health declining, he reſigned to him the whole of it.

From this period Mr. Hanbury's character acquired a conſiderable degree of eclat in the commercial world. Shrewd—active—indefatigable—he approved himſelf the man of ſtrict integrity in all his dealings—of candour and univerſal benevolence in the various intercourſes of ſocial life. Happy in an union with a woman of congenial virtue, a ſeries of years had paſſed, when a ſon, the only fruit of their marriage, having attained maturity, our merchant began to entertain

entertain thoughts of retiring from buſineſs. The fortune he had acquired was a princely one, neither did avarice form the ſmalleſt part of his character; yet he thought his ſon, who was a moſt promiſing young man, would be far more benefitted by purſuing, for ſome years, the mercantile profeſſion, than he poſſibly could be by indulging, at his time of life, in luxurious eaſe—the buſineſs therefore was reſigned to him, and Mr. Hanbury, with his lady, quitted the buſtle of life for country retirement.

Having purchaſed a compact eſtate

eſtate in one of the fineſt counties in England, on which he erected one of thoſe elegant villas which render our Engliſh landſcapes ſo delightfully pictureſque, and convey to foreigners a pleaſing idea of opulence and comfort.

Roſe-Hill, the name it received, was remarkable for the neatneſs and ſimplicity of its ſtructure, while nothing bordering on the ſhewy or magnificent was to be ſeen about it,—there was every thing which the heart could wiſh of comfort and convenience. Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury here exhibited the ſeveral virtues which diffuſe happineſs

happineſs over the ſcenes of ſocial life—to their wealthy neighbours they were ſhining examples of liberality, beneficence, and piety—to the poor they were, on all occaſions, ſteady friends, and ever ready to protect them againſt the oppreſſions of every ſpecies of petty tyrants—encouraging their induſtry, ſupplying their real wants, and ſolicitous by every probable means to better their conditions, by improving their moral character—in a word, they were the friends of human nature.

Such were the Hanburys, and I believe, my dear Eugenia, you will

will agree with me, that there wanted not the falſe blandiſhments of rank to throw luſtre on their character.

I am yours, &c. &c.

LETTER II.

NOT far diſtant from Roſe-Hill ſtood a heavy old-faſhioned pile of building, which for ſeveral centuries had been in poſſeſſion of the Seaforth family. This enormous pile of ſtones, heaped together according to the Gothic taſte of our forefathers, without regularity or deſign, appeared in a deep hollow, between two vaſt rocky

hills—a venerable grove led to the manſion, which, when diſcerned, preſented to the admirers of that ſtyle of architecture a picture of majeſty in ruins. One wing of the building was fallen into abſolute decay, and the other apparently owed its preſervation to the thick mantling ivy, which luxuriantly adhered to it; while from the battlements the diſſonant notes of owls and ravens heightened the gloom of ſo deſolate a ſcene. Such, however, as it was the Seaforths piqued themſelves on being the proprietors of it, and certainly thought its damp and dreary walls infinitely preferable to the commodious and healthy apartments of

of the neat edifice which they ſaw ariſe in their neighbourhood.

The landed property of this family had ſuffered by the lapſe of time no leſs than the houſe —by ſome of thoſe changes incident to all ſublunary things, it had, in the courſe of ſeveral generations, paſſed into other hands, and what now remained was ſo very inconſiderable as hardly to deſerve the name of a competence, even in the limited ſenſe of the word; ſtill, however, thoſe means of retrieving a ſhattered fortune, which commerce affords, were conſidered as highly derogatory to the dignity of a family ſo nobly

deſcended—they choſe therefore to ſuſtain the diſagreeable ſtraits which actual indigence, aſpiring at grandeur, muſt infalliby undergo. Pride and meanneſs were conſequently blended throughout their conduct; and if on ſome occaſions it was found neceſſary to affect the magnificent, the domeſtic department was deſtined to ſuffer for a conſiderable time afterwards.

The honourable Mr. Seaforth was a perſon of few ideas, and ſo elate with his notion of family dignity, as ſcarcely to ſeem conſcious of the exiſtence of any other beings than thoſe of his own houſhold

hold and dependances. His lady, no leſs illuſtriouſly deſcended, was the exact counterpart of himſelf.

Their offspring conſiſted of two ſons and a daughter—the eldeſt ſon (Edric), of whom, as the future repreſentative of a noble houſe, mention muſt firſt be made, was at this time about five and twenty—his genius was by no means brilliant, neither was it ſo mean, but that a tolerable education would have enabled him to have become a reſpectable member of ſociety: The only attainments, however, in literature which he was ſuffered to acquire, were a few ideas of writing and figures,

taught him by the village ſchool-maſter; and at length, to complete his ſcholarſhip, he learnt Latin and Greek of a Welch clergyman, engaged as domeſtic tutor for that purpoſe. Mrs. Seaforth herſelf undertook the forming his principles, and, from what has been hinted of her character, a proper judgment might readily be formed of that of her pupil, who ſoon diſcovered a temper entirely biaſſed by ſelfiſhneſs and pride—taught to conſider the bulk of mankind as too contemptible for the notice of people of rank, his heart was a ſtranger to the ſocial affections—Benevolence and Charity, thoſe

divine emanations of Heaven, exiſt not where Pride uſurps their throne. Elate with ſelf-importance, his aſſociates were chiefly thoſe whoſe ſervile principles flattered his claim to ſuperiority, and his favorite amuſement, harraſſing his father's tenants, or ſuch whoſe condition in life rendered them paſſive under his inſolence and oppreſſion. The other children, William and Julia, not being conſidered of conſequence ſufficient to engage much attention, were ſuffered to remain juſt as nature formed them, a circumſtance really to their advantage. Their diſpoſitions were amiable, and they

were permitted to indulge them without interruption from the pernicious tuition of their mother—their underſtandings indeed were uncultivated, but their minds were unvitiated by the narrow maxims which influenced the reſt of the family.

Soon after the Hanburys had ſettled themſelves at Roſe-Hill, Mr. Seaforth returning one day from a walk, told his lady he had juſt paſſed the people at Roſe-Hill in their carriage.

"Their carriage! (reiterated ſhe

ſhe with a look of contempt) I am ſick at the mention of it."

"Why, my dear, did you not expect they would ſet up a carriage?"

"Certainly theſe trades-people are for apeing perſons of diſtinction in all circumſtances—but pray, Sir, what Arms do they aſſume?"

"None at all—they have a Cypher only."

"I am amazed at that—theſe people are immenſely fond of a ſhewy Coat of Arms—I thought their

their firſt had been to contrive that."

"Why what pretenſions, child, can this Hanbury have to armorial bearings?"

"None, to be ſure—but every upſtart can purchaſe one in theſe days, to the utter diſgrace, I think, of the Herald's Office."

"However it comes about, my dear, the Hanburys are at preſent without it."

Now it is certain that Mr. and Mrs. Seaforth might have ſurmiſed

miſed together on this circumſtance for a twelvemonth, without hitting on the true reaſon of this opinion, which was neither more nor leſs than that Mr. Hanbury himſelf utterly deſpiſed Enſigns armorial, as a ſpecies of childiſh trumpery, fit only to amuſe the moſt trifling mind.—"As I have no reaſon (he uſed to ſay) to bluſh at my name, I think the initials of it a far better ornament to my chaiſe than thoſe idle daubings which are too inſignificant to be the ſerious concern of rational beings."

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gave occaſion to one of a more virulent kind. Mr. Seaforth had dropped ſomething relative to an intention of living on friendly terms with the Hanburys—his lady was enraged—viſit ſuch kind of creatures—could he believe ſhe could ſo far forget her own dignity—was aſtoniſhed that he could be mean enough to think of it—he however might do as he pleaſed, but for her part ſhe hoped ſhe knew better what belonged to herſelf and family than to have any connexion with ſuch vulgar beings. After ſuſtaining a torrent of invective, with tolerable non-chalance, Mr. Seaforth had the

the good fortune to carry his point at laſt, and convinced his lady of the propriety of their viſiting their neighbours at Roſe-Hill, by enforcing the ſame conſiderations which had determined him to a meaſure, in many reſpects totally inconſiſtent with the hauteur which predominated in his character.—The Seaforths, for many years paſt, had been accuſtomed to ſee their will implicitly received as a law to the whole pariſh, but, as Mr. Hanbury had realized much landed property therein, it was reaſonable to expect a counterbalance of parochial intereſt. Now as every ſyſtem of government has its

its ſecrets, Mr. Seaforth prudently meditated a coalition of parties as the only mode of preventing a diminution of power—for although the feudal tenure has been long aboliſhed in England, and the poor are not actually transferrable, like herds of cattle, at the will and pleaſure of the rich, yet certain it is, that by the preſent operation of the poor laws, the condition of vaſſalage ſeems not utterly extinct amongſt us. There are methods of harraſſing and oppreſſing the lower orders of the community, which operate as effectually in preventing all diſorderly attempts at natural rights as actual villainage anciently

anciently did—theſe matters, together with the preſervation of the game, and a few other concerns of the like nature, rendered it neceſſary that Mr. Hanbury ſhould not be left to give way to a fooliſh kind of humour, which the ignorant ſometimes call humanity. Another conſideration was, that the eſtates of the two parties lay contiguous to each other.—Mr. Seaforth was not remarkable for keeping his fences in the beſt order; cattle might therefore ſtray, and commit depredations on the lands of his neighbour, who, if not properly ſoftened, perhaps would prove litigious, and exact

ſuch

ſuch ſatisfaction as it probably would not be convenient to make —it was therefore prudently reſolved, by Mr. and Mrs. Seaforth, that the Hanburys ſhould be viſited in due form, and an early day was fixed for the purpoſe.

One of the firſt diſplays which Mr. Hanbury had given his rural neighbours of a diſpoſition truly benevolent, was the employing a number of poor labourers in levelling a hill, not for his own convenience ſo much as their benefit, at a ſeaſon when ſevere froſt had ſhut them up in dreary inactivity within their cold cottages. Mrs. Hanbury

Hanbury was diſtributing, with her own hands, the remains of a plentiful table to the families of theſe poor people, when the Seaforths drove up to the door. No ways diſconcerted at being diſcovered in the midſt of ſo humble a throng, that amiable woman received her viſitants with ſo frank and graceful an air as greatly aſtoniſhed Mrs. Seaforth, who was far from expecting to meet with any thing like elegance of addreſs in perſons long accuſtomed to trade, and had therefore come prepared to diſplay thoſe ſupercilious airs which generally awed the ruſtics around her. Mrs.

Hanbury had received every advantage which a genteel education could beſtow; and theſe, added to her own good ſenſe and ſweetneſs of temper, conſtituted her a truly well-bred and accompliſhed woman. Before the frank, eaſy, polite manners of this lady, Mrs. Seaforth's ſtudied dignity and formal ſtiffneſs ſunk into inſignificance—ſhe felt her inferiority, but it was the ſenſation, not of humility, but of envy—her eyes roved eagerly over the apartment, which was furniſhed in a ſtyle of elegance, and the pain the ſurvey coſt her rendered her ſo entirely abſent, that Mrs. Hanbury really

pitied

pitied an embarraſſment which ſhe ſuppoſed to be the effect of ruſticity, and, in order to relieve it, began a light converſation on the pleaſantneſs of that part of the county.

"Good lack? (cried Mrs. Seaforth) I really wonder, Madam, how you can be charmed with it —to me it is horridly dull—though indeed (with a ſarcaſtic ſneer) I can imagine that your eſtate, being new to you, has a beauty in your eyes which is not diſcovered by us, who have been accuſtomed to gaze on our poſſeſſions from our very birth."

Mr. Hanbury, who by this ſpeech began to comprehend ſomething of her character, replied with a ſmile—" You are certainly right, Madam,—an eſtate of one's own acquiring is far more eſtimable than one, of which we can only ſay, it was acquired by the good fortune or merit of one's anceſtors."

Mr. and Mrs. Seaforth looked at each other ſomewhat diſconcerted, and the former, to change the ſubject, ſaid—" I aſſure you, Mr. Hanbury, you will not find your eſtate wholly free from incumbrances—the poor rates are a heavy

heavy burden on the landed property of country Gentlemen—the poor, Sir, are a ſet of lazy wretches, who expect to be fed at the charge of the rich."

"And I fear, Mr. Seaforth, the expence muſt be borne till we become wiſe enough to rid ourſelves of the burden."

"You will merit the thanks of the country, Sir, could you diſcover a method of doing that."

"The method I would propoſe, and I believe it an effectual one, would be to provide the poor

with the means of intellectual cultivation, and they would ſoon emancipate themſelves from the ſloth of which you complain, it being only a natural conſequence of mental degradation."

"Ah, Sir, I doubt no means will amend ſo degenerate a race."

"And wherefore deſpair of it, my dear Sir—Can we not daily ſee the difference which education makes in the human character?"

"Yes, yes, I allow that—but then it is amongſt the higher claſſes of people I conclude."

"Sir,

"Sir, all men are born equal in their participation of nature's privileges."

Mr. Seaforth did not admit that propoſition—but not being inclined to diſcuſs the ſubject, he made no reply. In the mean time, Mrs. Hanbury had diſcovered ſomething extremely pleaſing in the perſon of Julia Seaforth, who had accompanied her mother on a viſit—that young lady was apparently about ſeventeen, of a ſweet ingenuous countenance; and tho' the awe of her mother's preſence reſtrained her from uttering a ſyllable, it was eaſy to diſcover in

her face the traits of ſenſibility, modeſty, and good nature, inſomuch that Mrs. Hanbury felt herſelf impelled to beſtow on her that portion of eſteem which ſhe was incapable of entertaining for Mrs. Seaforth, whoſe manners ſo much diſguſted, that nothing but a ſecret wiſh of commencing an acquaintance with the amiable Julia, could have induced her to promiſe ſhe would make an early viſit at the Hall.

During their return to the Hall, Mrs. Seaforth was very profuſe of her animadverſions on the perſons, manners, and converſation of the Hanburys; their houſe, furniture,

furniture, &c. In proportion as ſhe felt herſelf impelled ſecretly to applaud all which ſhe had ſeen and heard during the viſit, her obſervations were more ſeverely expreſſed — the conſciouſneſs that there was really nothing in that family to diſlike, but much to admire, gave keenneſs to her ſatire, and whetted the edge of what ſhe deemed wit, but which, in reality, was mere invective — her heart was rankling with envy, while that of the gentle Julia glowed with eſteem of thoſe very perſons whom her mother was ſatirizing, with all the force of rooted malevolence.

LETTER III.

THE Hanburys having agreed to dine at the Hall, on a day fixed for the occaſion, Mrs. Seaforth, conſcious of having miſſed a triumph on the former interview, determined that nothing ſhould now be wanting which could convey an idea of magnificence, and put the ſuperiority of the two families beyond all queſtion. The whole entertainment therefore was in a ſtyle of gloomy ſtate, and ill-ſupported oſtentation—convivial eaſe was intirely diſregarded—all was hurry

hurry and confuſion. We are ſeldom exceſſively anxious to excel but we fall ſhort even of the point of mediocrity.—Thus it happened to the lady of the Manſion—uncommon exertion had ſo far ruffled her temper, not naturally the moſt ſweet, that the dinner, though a good one, proved a moſt unſocial, and to the Hanburys certainly a very unpleaſant repaſt.—The only perſon at table who diſcovered a diſpoſition to loquacity was Mr. Edric Seaforth, who gave a ſpecimen of his converſible talents by relating, with tedious minuteneſs, every circumſtance of a fox-chace, in which he had that morning

morning been engaged: During this edifying diſcourſe, the ladies removed to the drawing-room, where they were joined by the remainder of the Seaforth family, i. e. William and Julia, who had neither of them been permitted to grace the table—the former of theſe young perſons, Mrs. Hanbury had not ſeen before—he was about nineteen, of an elgant mien and pleaſing addreſs; and what little he uttered diſcovered a certain delicacy of ſentiment, and elevation of ſoul—his manners poſſeſſed the amiable ſimplicity of an honeſt untutored mind. Nature indeed had been liberal in her gifts to this

young

young man, and ſhe alone had been left to form his character, Edric having ever been the ſole engroſſer of their parents attention and regard, a circumſtance which both Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury by this time ſo clearly perceived, that it probably was at firſt a principle motive with their benevolent hearts, in the notice they thenceforth took of the two young people.

Mrs. Seaforth happening to leave the room, Julia, as though impelled by the attraction of Mrs. Hanbury's ſweetneſs and virtue, drew her chair cloſe to her's, and gently

gently took her hand, with an expreſſion which denoted more than a thouſand compliments, the reſpect and eſteem ſhe entertained for her. "O, Madam, (cried ſhe) what a ſweet place you have at Roſe-Hill."

"And will not my dear Miſs Seaforth render it ſtill more agreeable by giving me her company there as frequently as poſſible?"

"I ſhould be very happy, Madam, in the honour of your acquaintance."

"And as I, my dear, ſhould be

be particularly happy in yours, I beg, that from this time we may be frequent companions."

"Ah, Madam, would you honor me ſo far—but my mother does not like I ſhould go out, though William and I walk a good deal together, and I believe he will have no objection to attend me ſometimes as far as Roſe-Hill."

"Rather, Siſter, (cried he) you ſhould ſay that I would be delighted, with this lady's permiſſion, ſo to do."

"Come

"Come both of you, my dear children, (replied Mrs. Hanbury) as often as poſſible—you will then make both Mr. Hanbury and me extremely happy, who, though we are ſo much your ſeniors, I hope we ſhall not prove dull companions to our young friends."

At that inſtant the Gentlemen came to attend the tea-table—they entered, earneſtly diſcuſſing ſome points reſpecting the game-laws. "I tell you, neighbour Hanbury, (ſaid Mr. Seaforth, warmly) that if you reſolve to be thus eaſy, you will not have a hare left on your Manor."

"And

"And I tell you (anſwered he, good humouredly) that I had rather never ſee one at my table, than it ſhould be by a violation of the natural rights of mankind."

"Damned ſtuff—natural rights—why, Sir, is not the excluſive privilege of killing game a natural right of thoſe who are legally qualified?"

"A legal right, if you pleaſe, but not a natural one. When you can command the animals of the chaſe to feed only in your own fields, or the birds of the air to confine themſelves to your manors, I will

then allow thoſe rights to be natural ones."

"What then I ſuppoſe you never intend to courſe or ſhoot, ſince you cannot tame thoſe creatures?"

"I do not ſay that, Sir—but if my farmer ſhould chance to kill a hare on the lands he rents of me, I would be far from conteſting his right ſo to do."

Here the indignation of Edric could no longer be reſtrained within the limits of decency and he exclaimed in a voice of rage—

"D—n

"D—n it, Mr. Hanbury, you talk like an ignoramus—what, would you have people of rank and fortune ſit down tamely, and ſee their game deſtroyed, by a ſet of wretches, who may be glad if they can get carrion to eat?"

"And yet (returned Mr. Hanbury, more ſhocked at the inhumanity of that ſentiment, than the rudeneſs offered himſelf), and yet, Mr. Edric, there is not one of thoſe wretches but is of more importance in the ſocial chain than the arrogant Lord of the Manor who deſpiſes him."

"I do not wonder (reſumed Edric, biting his lips with rage) to hear this from Mr. Hanbury."

"Young Gentleman (ſaid Mr. Hanbury, totally unmoved by that contemptuous inſinuation) you are right—it is not a matter of wonder that a man, who, like myſelf, has paſſed the greater part of his life in commerce, ſhould conſider all mankind as the offspring of one common parent—perſons of this claſs have many advantages over the mere country Gentleman, who neceſſarily moves in a contracted ſphere—he is enſlaved by prejudice, and enſtranged from the bulk of

of his fellow-creatures—no wonder therefore that his views ſhould often be found ſelfiſh and illiberal.

It is the privilege of commerce to enlarge the ſcale of our ideas—by its neceſſary intercourſe with the world at large, local prejudices are annihilated—we embrace all mankind as children of one univerſal family—we learn the true relation which man bears to man—diſcover the wants and intereſts of ſociety, and that chain of mutual dependance which links the whole circle of rational beings. In this enlarged view, Sir, we are led to conſider the doctrine of hereditary

privileges as a chimera—the pride of birth becomes ridiculous, and that dignity fictitious, which includes not pre-eminence in the qualifications moſt beneficial to human ſociety. Thus, Mr. Edric, you perceive how widely different are your ſentiments and mine; but as we are neither of us, I believe, diſpoſed to recede from our reſpective opinions, I think it will be more to the ſatisfaction of the company if we relinquiſh the farther diſcuſſion of them at preſent."

Edric felt himſelf diſconcerted by Mr. Hanbury's ſpeech, though not convinced—he looked ſullen and

and abaſhed. Mr. Seaforth's features wore a more than uſual ſolemnity, and a general ſilence for ſome minutes ſucceeded—but Mr. Hanbury was poſſeſſed of too much good ſenſe to ſuffer his temper to be diſcompoſed by ignorance and folly, and therefore ſoon threw the converſation into a more lively ſtrain, by relating ſome of thoſe facetious ſtories, with which a general knowledge of the world had ſtored his memory, and rendered him one of the moſt convivial companions.

Mrs. Hanbury, not finding any thing at the Hall to compen-

ſate for the ſacrifice of that time ſhe employed ſo beneficially at home, declined ſtaying ſupper.—On their way to their comfortable villa at Roſe-Hill, ſhe could not help remarking to her huſband that Seaforth Hall was a gloomy uncomfortable manſion.

"It is ſo (replied he), and the minds of its inhabitants are in the ſame ſtyle—that is to ſay, they retain all the barbariſm of the darkeſt ages."

"That is ſomewhat ſtrange in the preſent improved ſtate of ſociety."

"Pride,

"Pride, my dear, (ſaid Mr. Hanbury) is that opaque quality which no light can irradiate."

By this viſit the Seaforths had acquired the knowledge of two points very neceſſary to the regulation of their future conduct—The one, that it was a vain attempt to affect ſuperiority, by expreſſing a contempt of trade, ſince the perſons whom they expected to mortify, by ſo doing, conſidered it in the moſt honorable light—the other, that Mr. Hanbury's ſolid and cultivated underſtanding put it at all times in his power to repel

the attacks of pride, folly, or impertinence, with disadvantage to the assailants.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

ENCOURAGED by the engaging condeſcenſion of Mrs. Hanbury, William and Julia Seaforth readily availed themſelves of her friendly overtures towards a familiar acquaintance—little regarded at home, their frequent abſence was ſcarcely noticed 'till they had eſtabliſhed themſelves in a friendly intimacy at Roſe-Hill. Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury tenderly commiſerating

commiſerating the mental condition of two amiable, though neglected, young perſons, reſolved to do every thing in their power to rectify the deficiencies of their education. Mr. Hanbury became William's preceptor, in the Belles Lettres, while his lady, with almoſt a maternal ſolicitude, formed the mind of Julia—thoſe generous cares were repaid with ſo lively an affection on the part of her young pupil, that ſhe gradually began to regard her in the endearing light of a daughter.

In this manner paſſed the firſt year at Roſe-Hill—the viſits between

tween that family and the Seaforths were not continued with the frequency which might at firſt have been expected—they ſeldom viſited each other, and then in a formal manner. Mr. Hanbury's character was, by this time, univerſally known and revered in this part of the world—he was never ſpoken of, except at the Hall, but in terms of admiration—the poor conſidered him as their patron—indeed honeſt induſtry and real diſtreſs, in whatever claſs he met with it, never failed of exciting his encouragement and aſſiſtance. Before his reſidence in that pariſh, the revenue collected for the ſupport

port of the poor, was ſuffered to paſs through the hands of thoſe, who ſcrupled not to enrich themſelves by that which ought to have been beſtowed on the neceſſitous. To indulge their own indolence, the principal pariſhioners had agreed to appoint a perpetual overſeer, who was at once a farmer, miller, grocer, and, in ſhort, retailer of every article of life—inſtead of receiving their pittance in money, the poor were obliged to purchaſe of this man their neceſſaries, by ſuch weight and meaſure as a conſcience not over tender choſe to allow them. Mr. Seaforth, though the law-giver, in fact

fact to the whole pariſh, either through ignorance, or indolence, had connived at the injuſtice, though the enormous weight of parochial taxes was the inceſſant ſubject of his complaint. The penetration and public ſpirit of Mr. Hanbury ſoon placed matters on a more eligible footing, and rendered the condition of many poor families more worthy the ample proviſion which the humanity of our laws provides for them; at the ſame time he was a liberal promoter of every ſcheme which tends to awaken the induſtry of the lower orders of the community. Above all things he was

particularly

particularly anxious to rid the country of thoſe peſts of ſociety, petty-fogging attornies, whoſe ſubſiſtence depends on chicanery, and a vile perverſion of the principles of common equity—theſe honeſt Gentlemen had diligently kept up a ſpirit of litigation in the neighbourhood, to the utter ruin of many, and the deſtruction of ſocial harmony in general. The probity of Mr. Hanbury, and his indefatigable attention to the happineſs of all around him, rendered him, at length, the arbitrator of all their petty differences; and ſo generally was his character eſteemed, that his deci-

ſions

ſions had with them the force of law.

The Seaforths, however, ignorant that true dignity is of a perſonal nature, and not the reſult of oſtentatious glare, conſidered the popularity of their neighbours as an encroachment on their natural privileges—their high birth they ſuppoſed entitled them to the deference of all around, and they could not ſee it paid to another, who they conſidered as an inferior, without feeling very uneaſy ſenſations, not at all conſidering that virtue only is true nobility. The following incident may

ſerve to elucidate their ideas in this reſpect:—It happened that Mrs. Seaforth and Mrs. Hanbury were croſſing the church-yard together, to their reſpective carriages, one Sunday after ſervice, when a poor girl, paſſing them, performed her honours in the beſt manner ſhe could, but, unfortunately, thoſe honours conſiſted only of a ſingle courtſey, and that clearly directed to Mrs. Hanbury —the Lady of Seaforth Hall firſt reſented the indignity, by a ſcarlet glow on her cheeks, and then turned pale with malicious rage. On her return home ſhe acquainted her huſband of the inſulting circumſtance,

circumſtance, and inſiſted that John Harvey, the father of the offending girl, ſhould be immediately turned out of his cottage, or rather hovel, which he rented, at the end of their Park—it was in vain the old ſteward, who was not quite of ſo flinty a compoſition as themſelves, urged the cruelty of ſuch a meaſure, as the poor fellow's wife at that time lay almoſt at the point of death. Mr. Seaforth was as inexorable as his lady, and that wretched family were inſtantly turned out of doors, to face the inclemency of a bitter night, without the ſmalleſt ſhelter. Roſe-Hill being the com-

mon reſort of the diſtreſſed, the ſufferers repaired thither, and told their artleſs tale, which obtained them immediate aſſiſtance, and was alſo the means of ſuggeſting to Mr. Hanbury a farther hint for the advantaging his poor neighbours—finding, on inquiry, that their houſes were not only extremely ill conſtructed, as to the purpoſes of convenience, cleanlineſs, and health, but rented alſo at an exorbitant price, he gave immediate orders for the erecting a number of decent cottages, in which they might hereafter be more comfortably lodged, at a far leſs expence.

By

By theſe, and various other exertions in the cauſe of juſtice and humanity, did this good man really acquire that conſequence which many, miſtaking ſervility for reſpect, vainly ſuppoſe themſelves poſſeſſed of, and who, if ſtripped of mere external blandiſhment, would ſink to the loweſt degree of inſignificance.

"*Worth makes the Man, and want of it*
"*the Fellow.*"

POPE.

I ſhall conclude this letter, Eugenius, by remarking, that bad as the world is ſuppoſed to be,

Nature has ſtamped a reverence of virtue ſo indelibly on the human heart, that nothing but the prejudices of the worſt education can entirely ſuppreſs it. The illuſtrious William Penn, without the luſtre of rank or title, was enabled to eſtabliſh a reputation, which would be ill exchanged for that of an Alexander—his endowments of ſoul were capable of facilitating even the love and reverence of Savages—an inconteſtible proof that the reſpect which is not founded ſolely on perſonal virtue is a ſervile ſentiment, extorted by power, rather than the genuine tribute of reaſon,

conſequently

conſequently of no value to the truly good and wiſe.

I am yours, &c.

LETTER V.

THE following ſummer produced a ſcene of Gala at Roſe-Hill, by the arrival of Mr. Frank Hanbury, who was ſtill proſecuting that line of buſineſs in which his father had moved with ſo much reputation and ſucceſs. Every advantage of perſon appeared in this young Gentleman, accompanied by all the graces of poliſhed

poliſhed manners and addreſs—polite, ſenſible, accompliſhed, he was juſtly the delight of his parents, and univerſally eſteemed, both on account of his perſonal endowments, and the many virtues eminent in his character.

William Seaforth, who by the friendly footing on which he viſited at Roſe-Hill, had ample opportunity of becoming acquainted with the merit of young Hanbury, imbibed for him the moſt ſincere eſteem—true, he felt the ſuperiority which education, and knowledge of life, had beſtowed on his friend; but he felt it with-

out envy, and only breathed a ſecret ſigh on reflecting to how little purpoſe he himſelf was compelled to paſs the prime of youth —the more he diſcovered the excellencies of Frank's endowments, the more conſcious he became of the inſignificance of his own character—the trite ſcenes of ſtill life diſguſted him—he panted to move on a more extenſive theatre, and to ſuſtain a character more befitting the rational nature of man.—He was a youth of quick ſenſibility, and acute perception—his ideas were therefore imbibed with rapidity, and indulged to enthuſiam—diſſatisfied with his preſent mode

mode of life, the gay picture of the world at large ſo ſeriouſly impreſſed his imagination, that he grew penſive, and evidently loſt the natural gaiety of his temper. At length Frank returned to the Capital, and every thing became ſtill more diſguſting—their acquaintance had produced mutual friendſhip, and Seaforth now felt a vacuum in his breaſt, which nothing around him could fill—even the gentle Julia acknowledged, that charming as her hours had ever paſſed at Roſe-Hill, the company of Frank Hanbury was capable of augmenting the pleaſure. Sauntring with her brother

brother one day in the Woods of Seaforth Hall, ſhe ventured to expreſs a ſurpriſe at the melancholy turn which his temper had of late aſſumed.

"Am I leſs cheerful than uſual, Julia," anſwered he.

"Indeed, William, you are, and I hope you love me well enough to acquaint me with the cauſe of what I cannot ſee without pain."

With a penſive look he inſtantly pointed to a ſnail, which was creeping in and out among the leaves

leaves of a roſe-tree—" Do you ſee that inſect?" ſaid he.

" I was juſt obſerving it, and imagining it muſt lead a ſoft, eaſy, kind of life."

" There you anticipate my obſervation—that ſnail paſſes, 'tis true, an eaſy exiſtence, but an inglorious one, Julia.—Do you think, that if it could comprehend the nature of yonder bird, it would be longer ſatisfied with ignominiouſly crawling on the earth?"

" I ſuppoſe not—but what would

would you infer from thence, William?"

"Why that I, Julia, reſemble the ſnail—baſking, indeed, in the ſunſhine of ignoble indolence, but really holding no higher place in the ſcale of rational beings, than that mean inſect does in the irrational one."

"Your moſt obedient, Sir,—ambition, I find, has been at work with my poor brother."

"My ſweet ſiſter, do not ridicule what to me is a very ſerious and painful feeling—call it by what

what name you pleaſe, but I certainly feel a principle within my breaſt, ſpurning the contemptible mode of life I have hitherto paſſed. However, ſince you have my ſecret, it is but fair I ſhould demand yours—What is the reaſon of a certain unuſual reſtleſſneſs of temper I of late diſcern in my dear Julia—is ſhe too ambitious?"

"Ah, No, (with a ſigh) I would not give two ſtraws to be an Empreſs."

"You are quite ſatisfied then with being what you are—to have the villagers following you with nods

nods and courtſeys, and a group of ragged brats hallooing as you go—there is 'Squire Seaforth's coach."

"Nothing of this can delight me, brother—I had rather poſſeſs the approbation of——

"Go on (laughing), or ſhall I conclude the ſentence for you—you mean the approbation of one Gentleman. Not ambition, but love, I ſuſpect, has been at work with my poor ſiſter. You would not give two ſtraws to be an Empreſs, Julia, but would you not give ſomething more to be Mrs. Frank Hanbury?"

"Nay

"Nay, William, this is uſing me cruel indeed—it is impoſſible that Frank Hanbury ſhould ever beſtow a thought on me."

"Why impoſſible—he has wealth enough to induce him to overlook the want of it in a wife."

"True—and I believe generoſity enough to deſpiſe ſo paltry a conſideration—ſtill ſuch a mind as his will never connect itſelf with one of the Seaforth ſtamp.—Believe me, William, I never felt the conſciouſneſs of inſignificance 'till lately."

This artleſs confeſſion gave a ſecret pang to the generous heart of William—he had indeed frequently thought young Hanbury diſcovered great attention to his ſiſter, but this, he was perſuaded, could mean nothing more than the reſpect which every well-bred man pays to the fair ſex in general —nor could he ſuppoſe it poſſible, from the different characters of the reſpective families, that an union of that ſort ſhould ever take place between them — finding therefore that there was nothing to be ſaid in encouragement of Julia's ſecret flame, he rather wiſhed to turn the converſation, which

which he did, by adverting to his own affairs. After ſome farther deliberation on the ſubject, it was thought adviſeable, by both, that Mr. Seaforth himſelf ſhould be ſolicited to determine on ſome mode of eſtabliſhment for William.

A favourable opportunity, for the purpoſe, ſoon offering, he, in a very reſpectful manner, addreſſed the old Gentleman, obſerving, that he was now arrived at an age when ſome method might properly be thought of for ſettling him in life, and prevent his being bur-

denſome, in future, to the family.

"Ah, Boy, (cried Mr. Seaforth) your poor brother Edward, by the time he was as old as you are, was in the ſervice, and many a laurel had he put on his brow, by the time he was ſhot in battle."

Mr. Seaforth's reply had, undeſignedly, glanced at the profeſſion, of all others, moſt predominant in William's inclination—the military line was the object of his choice—his imagination had dwelt on it 'till his whole ſoul was fired with a generous, though perhaps

haps romantic ardour—he therefore eagerly demanded of his father, why he might not be permitted alſo to tread the path of glory.

"Eh, Billy—what you have a mind then to be a ſoldier—in truth, lad, I wiſh thou wert one with all my ſoul."

"Have I then, Sir, your approbation?" with an air of tranſport.

"Why yes, child, I think ſo—but I muſt conſider of it."

At that interim Edric and his mother entered the room, and Mr. Seaforth immediately acquainted them of the ſubject, which William had brought on the tapis, to which Mrs. Seaforth anſwered—"You know, my dear, we have often reflected on the condition of our younger ſon, whenever, by your death, the Eſtate devolves to Edric—and, as he has now diſcovered an inclination for the army, I think we muſt endeavour to eſtabliſh him in that line."

"We muſt buy him a commiſſion then, (reſumed Mr. Seaforth)

forth) but I can't ſee how the money is to be raiſed for that purpoſe, except Edric is diſpoſed to be helpful in the caſe."

"In what way, Sir, (cried he, ſurlily) can I be helpful in William's affairs."

"I will tell you, ſon—the family Eſtate being, every acre of it, entailed on you, we cannot obtain the ſum requiſite to this buſineſs, except you join with me in a bond."

"I join in a bond—you know very well, Sir, that you will never

be able to clear the mortgages, with which it is already incumbered."

"Child, I was never able to do it, as your mother brought me no fortune, and a family coming on——"

"Let me tell you, Sir, (interrupted Mrs. Seaforth, angrily) that a daughter of the houſe of Deſmond was not ſuppoſed to want, what every dirty mechanic, now a days, can pack a daughter off with."

"No offence, love, (replied he

he, ſubmiſſively) I know that your birth and accompliſhments were more than equivalent to my poor acres—I was always ſenſible of the honour of your alliance—but let us now talk of matters in hand.—Edric, you ſeem averſe to taking up a little more money on the Eſtate."

"To be ſure I am, Sir,—for I believe I ſhall feel it ſufficiently ſaddled as it is."

"But conſider, ſon Edric, (ſaid Mrs. Seaforth) that it is for the eſtabliſhment of your brother, who, at your poor father's death, muſt

muſt otherwiſe be quite unprovided for."

"It is not my fault, Madam, if he was born after me."

"I have thought of an expedient (reſumed Mr. Seaforth), which will ſatisfy all parties—we will take up a few hundreds, Edric, and, as it is for William's uſe, he ſhall join in the ſecurity, and alſo give you a bond, by which he obliges himſelf to repay you, whenever he ſhall be in a condition of ſo doing."

"But, Sir, (replied Edric) ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe he ſhould get knocked on the head with a cannon ball, who is to repay me then?"

Mrs. Seaforth, whoſe maternal partiality ſtrongly inclined on the ſide of her eldeſt ſon, here took up the queſtion—"Well ſaid, Edric, (cried ſhe) thoſe who over-reach you muſt riſe betimes, as they ſay, —and indeed, Mr. Seaforth, upon father conſideration, I think we ought not to urge this point—the honour and dignity of our noble houſe muſt reſt hereafter with Edric—to attempt to curtail him of the means of ſupporting it, would

would certainly be a moſt injudicious ſtep on our ſide."

This opinion was the deciſive ſtroke—Mr. Seaforth could advance nothing farther, and poor William was compelled to retire in chagrin.

LETTER VI.

THE evening of that day on which the former conſultation took place, Edric Seaforth, who was remarkable for that kind of vanity, which we mean to expreſs when we ſay, ſuch an one likes to be king of his company, had ſpent a convivial evening with ſome of his father's tenants, from whom he extorted a gaping admiration, by

by retailing ſcraps of politics, and fag ends of Acts of Parliament; during which diſplay of oratory the foaming tankard had circulated ſo briſkly, that, in common with his elegant companions, he became abſolutely in a ſtate of intoxication. It happened to be William's diſaſtrous fate to meet his brother in this ſituation—at the ſight of him Edric's cheeks fluſhed, if poſſible, a deeper ſcarlet; and, being in that ſtate in which people are ſaid to utter their real ſentiments, without diſguiſe, he thus accoſted him—

"Get

"Get out of the way, you whining coxcomb—what, I ſuppoſe you thought I had no more ſenſe than to buy little maſter a red coat, for fear he ſhould cry—but I tell you, Sir, whenever I ſhall be the maſter of this houſe, I will do myſelf the pleaſure of kicking you out of it; and if you can find nobody to put a cockade in your hat, you may go follow the plough, as beſt befits ſuch a lubberly blockhead."

William, not at all reliſhing the diſcourteous addreſs, returned the compliment with a ſmart box on the ear, which ſent his opponent,

nent, already in a ſtaggering condition, with velocity to the ground —The buſtle of this fracas immediately brought Mr. and Mrs. Seaforth from the parlour—the latter, on ſeeing the bleeding forehead of her heir, (for in the fall he had cut it with a ſtone) uttered the bittereſt reproaches to William, who, ſhe ſaid, it was clear had a wicked deſign againſt his brother's life. Mr. Seaforth was, at firſt, as much incenſed as herſelf; but learning a true account of the affair from the ſervants, he deſired poor William to retire to his chamber, promiſing to make his peace with his mother. He readily

readily obeyed his father's command, but not with a diſpoſition to ſleep—his paſſions had been too highly rouſed to allow the inclination of repoſe. No ſooner was he alone, than he began to reflect on his wretched condition, as a younger ſon, the inglorious inactivity, nay more, the certain indigence to which he was apparently doomed, the idea of being dependent for a mean ſubſiſtence on a brother—ſuch a brother as Edric Seaforth—all ruſhed ſo forcibly on his imagination, that, before the houſe clock had ſtruck one, he had formed a reſolution of eloping from the family, and ſeeking that aſ-

ſiſtance amongſt ſtrangers, which he deſpaired of finding at home.

The whole family were, by this time, in profound ſleep, and all was gloomy ſilence, when William, having packed up the whole of his little fortune, amounting to about five guineas, and as much linen as he could carry in a pocket handkerchief, privately decamped. As he paſſed the apartment of Julia, a ſigh eſcaped him, and he felt irreſolute for a moment—at length he determined to proceed, and, making his way to a back door, got out undiſcovered.

His

His abſence from the breakfaſt table, on the ſucceeding morning, was ſuppoſed to be the effect of ſullenneſs by all, except Julia, who haſtily ſwallowed a cup of tea, and then ran to her brother's apartment, which ſhe found empty —it was clear, moreover, that he had not been in bed. Her diſtreſs preſently alarmed the reſt of the family. A ſervant was diſpatched to inquire if he were at Roſe-Hill, but Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury not having ſeen him for ſome days paſt, Mrs. Seaforth inſtantly declared, that ſhe believed William had drowned himſelf; and Edric looked as though he cared not if

it were ſo. Orders were given to ſearch the ponds and rivulets about the houſe, but to no purpoſe—at length the principals of the family, concluding all farther ſearch unneceſſary, contented themſelves with thinking no more of the affair. The tender-hearted and affectionate Julia, indeed, remained inconſolable for the abſence of a brother, whom ſhe ſincerely loved; and the ſervants, from the higheſt to the loweſt, diſcovered unfeigned concern, for his gentle and engaging diſpoſition had inſpired them with reverence and love—it was, in ſhort, the opinion of the neighbourhood,

that fortune had egregiouſly blundered, when ſhe preferred Edric to the heirſhip of the ancient houſe of Seaforth.

LETTER VII.

IT was on one of thoſe fine ſerene evenings, which people of uncorrupted taſte will pronounce to have a thouſand beauties, when Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury, arm in arm, were ſtrolling about the environs of the village, when, in a ſmall garden, adjoining an obſcure cottage, they ſaw a handſome young woman, playing with a lovely

lovely boy, who ſeemed about three years old—there was ſomething, they thought, in her figure extremely intereſting—it was elegant, yet depreſſed by an air of melancholy—her dreſs was clean, but plain, and evidently of the meaner kind, yet was there, in her face and air, ſomething which beſpoke ſuperiority of ſoul.

Mrs. Hanbury was expreſſing her ſurpriſe to her huſband, as they paſſed on, when, meeting one of the villagers, ſhe inquired who it was that reſided at yonder cottage—"It is Miſs Lavington, Madam."

"And who is Miſs Lavington?"

The woman looked as though ſhe cared not to be explicit in her information—"She is a good creature, Madam, (anſwered ſhe) and we all pity her misfortune."

"She is unhappy then—and from what cauſe?"

"She lives a melancholy life, to be ſure—I believe ſhe hardly ſpeaks to a living ſoul, but 'Squire Edric Seaforth, and he does not come very often—the neighbours ſay

ſay that ſhe will cry for an hour together over her little boy."

Mrs. Hanbury inſtantaneouſly comprehended the outlines of the ſtory—having diſmiſſed the woman, ſhe ſaid, "I doubt this young creature is in a very ineligible ſituation, with reſpect to Edric Seaforth—by the melancholy, apparent in her air, the chains of vice ſeem to ſit unpleaſantly on her mind—who knows, Mr. Hanbury, but that the encouragement of ſome kind friend only is wanting, to reſtore her to the path of rectitude."

"At

"At leaſt, my dear, (he replied) you wiſh to make the trial."

"I own it, (ſhe reſumed) yet when one conſiders the prejudices of the world, and how hazardous it is to indulge the workings of benevolence on ſuch occaſions, leſt our charity ſhould ſubject us to imputations, injurious to a fair character, I feel ſomething of that timidity, to which I believe it is owing, that theſe unhappy women do not meet with the lenity we ſhew to many other ſpecies of vice."

"Their

"Their miſconduct, my dear, (ſaid he) is of ſuch a nature, that, much as they are often to be pitied, I confeſs there are few ladies who can, with any propriety, aſſiſt them, without danger to their own reputation. A virtuous woman can ſeldom patronize one of an oppoſite character, without incurring unfavourable ſuſpicions of her own principles; ſuch is the malignancy of the world—but you, Lydia, might indulge your compaſſionate feelings with ſafety, as I ſhall readily co-operate with you in the benevolent ſcheme you meditate."

Mrs. Hanbury looked her huſband

band a kind acknowledgment, and it was agreed by them, that Miſs Lavington ſhould be invited to dine at Roſe-Hill the next day—the friendly deſign, however, was not eaſily effected; for that unfortunate young lady was ſo anxious to ſequeſter herſelf from the world, that ſhe poſitively, though politely, refuſed the invitation, and appeared diſconcerted, at finding ſhe had attracted Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury's notice. However, as they had waited on her in perſon, to make the overture of a farther acquaintance, the friendly manner in which they expreſſed themſelves, and the frankneſs with which

which they delared their wiſhes of ſerving her, that her reſolution was finally overcome, and, burſting into tears, ſhe ſaid,

Ah, Madam, how happy would this kind notice render me, were I not conſcious that I owe it to your entire ignorance of my character—had you known my ſtory, you would not, nay, you ought not to have condeſcended thus."

" You are miſtaken, my dear, (returned Mrs. Hanbury) it was ſome imperfect hints of your character, which induced us to offer you our friendſhip."

" Is

"Is is poſſible there can be ſuch goodneſs—Oh! Madam, how ſoothing are thoſe kind words to a wounded heart."

The Hanburys having thus far ſucceeded in their benevolent plan, placed Miſs Lavington, and her little ſon, in their carriage, and ſoon reached Roſe-Hill. Here they exerted themſelves, by every delicate attention, to raiſe the dejected ſpirits of their gueſt, and inſpire her with confidence — in the former reſpect their endeavours could not be ſucceſsful—ſhe felt their kindneſs with profound gratitude,

gratitude, but her heart was broken —happineſs could not be.

As ſoon as the ſervants were withdrawn, ſhe deſired permiſſion to relate her ſtory, the ſubſtance of which was briefly to the following effect:

Matilda Lavington was the only child of an opulent farmer, in Wiltſhire, who had formerly rented ſome part of the Seaforth Eſtate, by which circumſtance he acquired a knowledge of Mr. Seaforth, too ſuperficial indeed, to warrant the truſt he afterwards repoſed in him, of guardianſhip to his

his daughter. To whatever motive it was owing, Mr. Lavington, at his death, entruſted her ſolely to his care, with a fortune of about eight thouſand pounds. Matilda had been educated at a faſhionable boarding-ſchool, and was miſtreſs of every genteel accompliſhment; but her judgment wanted the forming hand of ſome judicious friend, and that ſhe was not ſo happy as to be favoured with—for on the death of her father, juſt as ſhe had entered her ſeventeenth year, Mrs. Seaforth determined to take her from ſchool, and place her under her own immediate care at the Hall—

this meaſure a prudential regard to her own family had dictated, not any affection for her huſband's ward, for ſhe wiſely conſidered, that a good round ſum for Matilda's board, would be no diſadvantage to their finances—the orphan lady, young, thoughtleſs, and beautiful, was therefore ſettled at Seaforth-Hall. Edric Seaforth, as has been obſerved, was bred up at home, the young people had therefore much opportunity of being together; and, as he poſſeſſed the advantage of a good perſon, ſhe much more vivacity than diſcretion, it will not appear ſurpriſing, that a mutual attach-

ment ſhould have ſucceeded--- but Edric well knew the pride of his family, and whether he ever had honourable deſigns on Matilda, or not, he choſe to avail himſelf of that pretext, by pretending a fear of his father's diſpleaſure, and therefore amuſed the poor girl, by a promiſe of marriage, by which he effectually won on her credulity, and triumphed over her honour— the effects of this clandeſtine amour were ſoon apparent. Mrs. Seaforth, forgetful of every idea of compaſſion or juſtice, ſpurned with indignation the idea of her ſon's repairing the injury by marriage, although Miſs Lavington's fortune

fortune would have been extremely ſerviceable to their affairs; but ſhe was the daughter of a farmer, and therefore unworthy to be the wife of Edric—theſe hints the young man readily availed himſelf of—Matilda was conſequently deſtined to bear the contempt and infamy, which her own indiſcreet regard had procured for her—with a thouſand bitter reproaches ſhe was compelled to leave the Hall, to brave the ſcorn of the virtuous, and the inſolence of the vicious part of the world. Theſe wretched effects, however, might, in ſome degree, have been palliated, had ſhe been miſtreſs of her for-

tune; but that was in the hands of Mr. Seaforth, who refuſed to make her the ſmalleſt remittance, and ſhe was compelled to owe a miſerable ſubſiſtence to the generoſity of Edric, who provided a ſmall cottage for her reſidence, not very diſtant from the Hall. Intimidated by the dread of actual want, and ſtill retaining a tenderneſs for her baſe ſeducer, ſhe here admitted his viſits, from which, indeed, her unhappy circumſtance allowed her not to reject—ſtill ſhe hoped he poſſeſs'd ſo much honour as to make her one day his wife: but at length he threw off the maſk, and appeared as deſtitute of tenderneſs,

tenderneſs, as he had ever been of generoſity and virtue—he endeavoured, by ſpecious pretences, to obtain from her the marriage bond he had given, but finding her reſolved not to part with it, he had recourſe to threats, and even cruelty, and at laſt treated her with abſolute contempt.

"This (purſued Miſs Lavington) has been my ſituation, Madam, for two years paſt. I cannot but deſpiſe the man who has behaved to me thus baſely, and who, I now ſee, poſſeſſes not one qualification deſerving eſteem—yet have I been conſtrained to ad-

mit his viſits, and to endure the caprice, and even brutality, of an ignoble mind, amidſt the horrors of my own remorſe, without a poſſibility of extricating myſelf from the wretched condition—for my mode of education renders me incapable of menial occupations—a ſervitude is the only line of life in which I could acquire ſubſiſtence, and from this my character totally precludes me—yet would even beggary be welcome.—Yes, Madam, I would tear myſelf from my baſe betrayer, and be content to beg from door to door—but my poor unhappy boy, could I bear

to

to ſee him periſhing by hunger, cold, and nakedneſs."

Here the unhappy Matilda burſt into a flood of tears—Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury accompanied that paroxyſm of anguiſh, by ſome compaſſionate—"See, (ſaid the latter) I was right, Mr. Hanbury, when I ſuppoſed this unfortunate girl would bleſs the hand that ſhould help her to regain the path of virtue."

"I have never known you wrong, my love, (he replied) when you conſulted the dictates of your own excellent heart."

This affectionate compliment caught the ear of Miſs Lavington, and it planted a thouſand daggers in her breaſt—"Theſe (thought ſhe) are the ineffable delights of virtuous love—of love, which, founded on reaſon and honour, the lenient hand of time has mellowed into friendſhip, pure, refined, angelic. This is the union which age improves, not deſtroys; and from this my own criminal levity has for ever excluded me—the child which would have been my pride, in a lawful connexion, is now my ſhame; and, what is ſtill worſe, he muſt, as ſoon as arrived at the period of reflection, deſpiſe

deſpiſe the parent to whom he owes his being."

From theſe bitter reflections ſhe was rouzed by Mrs. Hanbury, expreſſing a ſurpriſe, how it was poſſible for Edric to have kept this illicit connexion ſecret from his parents, immediately in their own neighbourhood.

"It is no ſecret to them, Madam, (replied Miſs Lavington) I am perſuaded they are not unwilling I ſhould be the miſtreſs of Edric Seaforth, although they never would have allowed him to make me his wife."

"Good

"Good heavens! (exclaimed Mrs. Hanbury) can ſuch principles exiſt in the parental boſom."

"I fear they can—(ſaid Mr. Hanbury) ſome degenerate inſtances have convinced me of this ſpecies of human depravity—but, my dear, we muſt think of ſome means of redreſſing this injured lady's unhappy caſe."

"By all means—but I wonder, my dear, (to Miſs Lavington) you never endeavoured to become miſtreſs of your fortune."

Ah, Madam, (cried ſhe) what could

could a friendleſs wretched being, like myſelf, do againſt the fortune and influence of Mr. Seaforth? I have no relations but very diſtant ones, and they would bluſh to appear intereſted in my concerns.—What can the miſerable do who have nobody to ſtand up in defence of their rights?"

"'Tis very true (rejoined Mr. Hanbury)—our laws are equitable, but juſtice is not always acceſſible to the friendleſs and poor: however, Madam, you have now met with a friend who will aſſert your rights. I will employ my own lawyer in your cauſe—mean time

time you, my dear Mrs. Hanbury, muſt find out a proper retreat for the lady and her child, as I preſume ſhe would wiſh to withdraw from this neighbourhood."

"Oh, were that but poſſible," exclaimed Miſs Lavington.

"It is both poſſible and practicable, (returned Mrs. Hanbury) I am acquainted with a worthy ſingle lady in town, who, on my recommendation, will gladly admit you to board in her family, 'till ſomething farther can be done to ſerve you."

Words

Words are inadequate to deſcribe the gratitude and joy of Matilda on this aſſurance. In fine Mrs. Hanbury wrote to town that evening—in a few days a favourable anſwer was returned, and Miſs Lavington, to her inexpreſſible ſatisfaction, ſet out privately for London, where ſhe was received in the Aſylum, which Mrs. Hanbury had provided for her, with great cordiality. Inſtructions were alſo forwarded to Mr. Hanbury's lawyer, and a ſuit at law was immediately inſtituted for the recovery of her fortune, out of the hands of her late guardian.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

MISS Lavington's ſudden diſappearance excited much more conſternation at Seaforth Hall, than the elopement of William had done—the latter circumſtance admitted a palliating conſideration, ſince by that raſh ſtep he had forfeited the protection of his family, and furniſhed them with at leaſt a decent excuſe, for entirely caſting

ing off ſuch an incumbrance as a younger ſon. With regard to poor Matilda, the caſe was widely different—it was not probable that ſhe would have fled from Edric's ſupport, unleſs patronized by ſome other perſon. They were not ignorant of her having been noticed of late by the Hanbury's, and therefore naturally concluded that they were the very perſons who had ſpirited her up to ſuch a reſolution—the motives of their conduct they could have no idea of, being themſelves utterly unacquainted with the amiable workings of benevolence, and could aſſign no reaſon for it, but a de-

ſire

ſire to do them a ſpite, which conſtruction conſcience, it may be ſuppoſed, had a principal hand in ſettling. Mr. Hanbury, how contemptuouſly ſoever they affected to conſider him, could not but appear a formidable adverſary, and, from this interference in Miſs Lavington's affairs, they were compelled to draw a very diſagreeable omen.

To heighten their hatred of that worthy family, another incident happened about the ſame time, which tended to mortify their prodigious ſelf-conſequence. Dr. Arlington, the rector of the pariſh,

pariſh, one morning paid a viſit at Roſe-Hill, and, after the uſual compliments, thus opened the buſineſs on which he came.

"You have heard, no doubt, Mr. Hanbury, that our neighbour, Mr. Edric Seaforth, intends to offer himſelf a candidate, to repreſent the Borough of ——, in the enſuing ſeſſion."

"I have heard ſo indeed, Dr. Arlington, but could not entirely credit the report."

"Nothing is more true, Sir— his father purpoſes to put him in

immediate poſſeſſion of as much landed property as will qualify him for the purpoſe; and therefore, knowing your extenſive intereſt in the ſaid Borough, I am come, in behalf of the family, to ſolicit your intereſt on the occaſion."

"I am extremely ſorry, Doctor, that I am obliged to refuſe it."

"Surely, Sir, it cannot ſo ſoon have been pre-engaged?"

"Not at all—but I can never give my vote in favour of the gentleman you recommend."

"Pardon

"Pardon me, Sir—where the laws ſee no objection, yours ſeems a little extraordinary—I hope you are not on unfriendly terms."

"And if we were, I aſſure you, Doctor, I would not ſuffer private reaſons to govern my conduct in a public matter, as the preſent unqueſtionably is."

"Will you give me leave then, my dear Sir, to aſk, what your objection to our young neighbour may be?"

"That will moſt decidedly appear, I conceive, Dr. Arling-

ton, by our diſcuſſing a few ſimple points—in the firſt place, pray what is your idea of an Engliſh Houſe of Commons?"

"Why, to be ſure, it's the third Eſtate, in our legiſlative ſyſtem."

"True, that is its denomination, but what of its nature and offices?"

Dr. Arlington felt embarraſſed by the queſtion.

"Perhaps (reſumed Mr. Hanbury) I have not ſtated the inquiry

inquiry perfectly clear—I apprehend then, Doctor, that the buſineſs of the Commons is primarily to protect the rights of the people."

"Yes, yes."

"Then muſt it not be the height of weakneſs to conſtitute that man the guardian of thoſe rights, which he himſelf would trample on, if allowed—a man whoſe principles, both by nature and education, are purely ariſtocratical, and who holds the people, that is to ſay, all beneath the rank of nobility, in ſovereign contempt."

"Why really, neighbour Hanbury, your diſcourſe leans ſo much on the ſide of French politics, that I am afraid you are for the levelling ſyſtem."

"The deſperate attempts of thoſe people for liberty convince me the more fully of its ſacred value. I am not a leveller myſelf, Dr. Arlington, I would, if poſſible, prevent the mercenary and ignorant from levelling even with the duſt the dignity of the Britiſh Conſtitution, which contains in its ſtructure all that is precious to civilized ſociety, and therefore will never give aſſent to a meaſure

which I think pernicious to the glorious fabric."

"I underſtand your meaning, (cried the Doctor, in an inſinuating tone) you perceive a deſign to cloud the majeſty of the people."

"That I am convinced can never be done but by ourſelves, in ſuffering prejudice or ignorance to govern the choice of our repreſentatives—the gracious Prince, now on the throne, is I believe ſo truly the friend of mankind, that could royal beneficence extend ſo far, there would not exiſt an ag-

grieved or unhappy perſon in the three kingdoms. But admitting Mr. Edric Seaforth's principles to be the reverſe of what I think them, ſtill I ſhould withhold my vote from a conviction, that neither his intellectual abilities, or moral character, qualify him for the important ſtation of a member of Parliament."

"This I doubt is mere private pique—what, my dear Sir, has a man's private character to do with his public one?"

"I ſhould not have expected that queſtion, Doctor, from a di-

vine—If we wiſh to have a true Parliamentary repreſentation, then let us be careful to elect ſuch men as are duly inſtructed in the principles of our Conſtitution, and are moreover enabled to form a comprehenſive idea of the intereſts of the community—that members ſo qualified might fill their places with dignity, without danger of being warped by party or faction, let them be alſo men of ſtrict integrity, ſuperior to mercenary regards, and incapable of baſeneſs:—And believe me, Dr. Arlington, were the whole body of Electors thus conſcientiouſly ſcrupulous, we ſhould have no cauſe to aſk

for

for a Parliamentary Reform—they who, regardleſs of the dictates of virtue and right reaſon, is capable of proſtituting his vote to the purpoſes of intereſt, or mercenary regards, is totally unworthy the noble privileges of a Briton. For my part, I hold the Conſtitution of my country in ſo ſacred an eſtimation, that I ſhould accuſe myſelf of an attempt to undermine it, were I to vote for any man whoſe principles, abilities, and character, were not obviouſly calculated to give dignity and value to the repreſentative ſyſtem."

The Doctor perceiving Mr. Hanbury's

Hanbury's determination was not to be eaſily ſhaken, ſet him down, in his opinion, as an obſtinate unreaſonable man; and, taking his leave, repaired to the Hall, in order to report the ill ſucceſs of his embaſſy.—"Upon my word, (cried Mrs. Seaforth, burſting with rage) we ſhould do well to keep a watchful eye on this fellow—I would lay my life he is no friend to Old England."

"You would not have concluded ſo, Madam, (replied the Doctor) had you heard him talk—he ſpeaks of the glory of our Conſtitution with abſolute enthuſiaſm, but

but I confeſs his ideas are quite romantic, fitted only for the land of Utopia."

Edric, however, ſwore he would ſtand a poll in ſpite of all oppoſition—ſhould it be ſaid that an upſtart, like Hanbury, had it in his power to diſappoint the ancient houſe of Seaforth?

"I am perſuaded you will think differently, Sir, (ſaid Dr. Arlington) and wait ſome more eligible opportunity for this purpoſe. Your opponent, Dennis, is exactly that ſober ſentimental fellow,

fellow, who will worm himſelf into Hanbury's intereſt."

"We went the wrong way to work, (cried Mr. Seaforth) old Hanbury ſhould have been worked on with the chink, rather than words."

"My dear Sir, (returned the other) you forget how little this man ſeems to know the value of money—'tis but a month ſince he advanced fifty pounds to Will Denham, who was going to be ſent to jail, and who, every body knows, will never be able to pay him; for it is really wonderful how

how he has ſupported a wife, and eight children, by the fruits of his own induſtry ſo long. I could give you twenty ſuch inſtances to prove that the mode you ſuggeſt would have ſucceeded no better."

In fine, it was thought adviſeable for Mr. Edric to wait a more favourable opportunity for offering himſelf as Candidate for a ſeat in the Legiſlative Aſſembly of his country, and in order to divert the chagrin, excited by two mortifying circumſtances, Mrs. Seaforth deviſed a jaunt to Bath; the party to conſiſt of herſelf, Edric, and Julia—the latter probably

bably would not have been nominated on the occaſion, but that her mother conceived it high time for the girl (as ſhe expreſſed herſelf) to ſee the world, or rather to be ſeen of it, hoping ſome civil gentleman or other might be induced, by Julia's attractions, to take her off their hands. Accordingly the antique heavy landau, drawn by a ſet of ill-paired, half ſtarved animals, conveyed them to that polite city, where we ſhall leave the illuſtrious trio for the preſent.

The

The following letter, from Mr. Frank Hanbury, was ſhortly after received at Roſe-Hill:

Neither you, my dear Sir, or my beloved mother, I truſt will accuſe me of negligence, by my deferring the acknowledgement of your welcome letter, when you ſhall be acquainted with the very ſingular occurrence which has of late engaged every moment of my leiſure. Happening to call one day at a coffee-houſe, in St. James's-ſtreet, my attention was caught by a curious dialogue, between a gentleman of the army, and

and a young man, apparently a private ſoldier.

"Is it poſſible (cried the latter) that you have never heard of my family, Sir?"

"Not I truly—but pray, Mr. Gentleman of family, what is it you require of me?"

"Sir, I only aſk you to obtain me a Commiſſion in his Majeſty's ſervice."

"A very modeſt requeſt truly—pray, Sir, be gone this inſtant, or I ſhall make you know better

the reſpect due to your ſuperiors?"

"I ſhall be gone, (reſumed the ſoldier, haughtily) but remember your royal maſter will not be backward to encourage the ardour and zeal of one, who can boaſt a more ancient deſcent than moſt of his Nobility."

Saying this the young man turned himſelf round, indignantly, and I had then an opportunity of obſerving his face—but judge, Sir, of my aſtoniſhment, when I diſcovered the features of William Seaforth, bearing a knapſack on his

his ſhoulder—I roſe, and exclaimed with unutterable ſurpriſe—"Is it poſſible!"

"My dear Frank, (returned he, graſping my hand) is it you I ſo luckily meet?—Indeed I ſaw you not before—that man's ill treatment has ſo much diſcompoſed me."

Perceiving the gentleman alluded to was General D——, and ſeeing we were noticed by all in the coffee-room, I took hold of his arm, and drew him towards the Park."

"In the name of fortune, my dear Seaforth, (ſaid I) what can have brought you to town?—and in ſuch a character too—I hope it is not your real one."

"Indeed but it is—I belong to a Regiment of Foot, but you ſhall know the whole another time—at preſent I am meditating vengeance on that raſcal.

"Who do you mean?"

"Why he, Sir, to be ſure, who meanly refuſed ſoliciting for me a Commiſſion, which the King, his maſter, would have granted

granted at a word—A young man of my family, Hanbury, to be rejected."

You will conclude, my dear father and mother, that I, by this time, began to ſuſpect my friend's intellects were deranged, and therefore endeavoured to prevail with him to go home with me as ſpeedily as poſſible, but this he abſolutely refuſed, being (as he declared) reſolved on laying the whole affair before the Sovereign, and actually was making towards the Palace for that purpoſe. With a view to humour what I ſuppoſed to be really a fit of lunacy,

I told him his Majeſty was then at Windſor, and that, as he could not prefer his ſuit immediately, he had beſt go to my houſe, and deliberate on the plan of doing it—to this he at laſt conſented. I took a coach to convey us into the city, and ſoon after obtained from him the following particulars, viz. that in conſequence of a diſagreement with his brother, he had privately quitted the Hall, with a determination to ſee it no more—at the next town he fell in with a Recruiting party, and immediately enliſted into the regiment, which being now ordered to London, he had come hither with

with the moſt ſanguine views, not at all doubting but as ſoon as the name of his family ſhould be made known to the general Officers, he ſhould inſtantly be promoted to conſiderable rank in the army. Elate with this viſionary proſpect, he conceived that a ſhorter way to effect the buſineſs, would be to wait on the Miniſter, and for this purpoſe took his route to Downing-ſtreet, but here, notwithſtanding the announcing his name and family, he found it impoſſible to obtain admiſſion. He next applied himſelf to General D——, whom he accidentally met, and followed to the coffee-houſe, en-

forcing his claim to promotion in the manner before related. To what farther extravagance he might have proceeded, it is impoſſible to ſay—at preſent he is deſcended ſomewhat nearer the level of common ſenſe. My firſt care was to purchaſe his diſcharge, to which he diſcovered no reluctance, being, I ſuſpect, pretty well diſguſted with the condition of a common ſoldier.

I think I ſee you ſmile, my dear Sir, and Madam, at the whimſicalneſs of the above adventure, which indeed muſt be allowed a ſtriking inſtance of the abſurdity

abſurdity into which a lively imagination, uncurbed by the dictates of a well informed judgment, is capable of leading perſons of the beſt natural underſtanding. Do we not almoſt daily ſee errors in the conduct of young people of both ſexes, originating in the ſame cauſe.

My friend William has condeſcended to accept an apartment in my houſe—I ſay condeſcended, for it evidently was reluctantly accepted at the firſt. Notwithſtanding the regard which I am convinced he entertains for me, he was viſibly embarraſſed by my invitation.

invitation.—"At your houſe, Hanbury, (reiterated he) it will be inconvenient—you are in trade—my reſidence here will incommode you." I coolly anſwered, with a ſmile, "As you pleaſe, Seaforth." He penetrated my ſentiments inſtantaneouſly, and, with a deep bluſh, cried, "Do not deſpiſe me, Frank?"

"I do not, (I replied) I love and eſteem my friend, ſuch as nature made him—not ſuch as he ſometimes appears from the prejudices of the nurſery."

William Seaforth, Sir, wants not

not the good ſenſe to condemn in himſelf the errors ariſing from a bad education---he is by nature frank, benevolent, ſincere; endowed with an excellent underſtanding, but the natural properties, both of his head and heart, have unhappily been biaſſed too much by the principles of his family---for my part, I am ſo thoroughly convinced of his intrinſic merit, in other reſpects, that I feel a fraternal concern for thoſe traits in his character, which, on a ſuperficial acquaintance, cloud his many excellent qualities, and ſhall therefore embrace every opportunity of eradicating

cating ſuch errors as prevent him from appearing what nature certainly intended him to be---an ornament of ſociety. With this view I took him with me the other morning to the Exchange—he was aſtoniſhed at meeting there with people of all nations—the nature of the affairs tranſacted there—the vaſt concerns of the commercial world ſeemed to give a new turn to his ideas. "I am loſt here, Hanbury, (cried he, graſping my hand with energy) I feel myſelf a very atom in the ſcale of intelligent beings."

"Not ſo unimportant neither, (returned

(returned I) but you ſee, my dear William, there is a conſequence in ſociety of another nature, than the mere diſtinctions of family."

"And I begin to ſuſpect (added he) a more valuable one alſo."

I muſt, however, my dear father, confeſs, that theſe hopeful dawns of mental expanſion in my friend, are more owing to a certain fair tutoreſs, than to all I could urge on the ſcore. Some evenings ſince, having received a card from Lady Heaton, I took Seaforth to her Ladyſhip's rout—

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a great deal of company had aſ-ſembled there—the ſcene was in-deed brilliant, but his attention was ſoon engaged, by the appear-ance of a very handſome young lady, whoſe name I did not then know. Shortly after, ſhe ap-proached that part of the room where we were, accompanied by my much reſpected neighbour, Mr. Manners, who accoſted me with his uſual friendly politeneſs, and announced the lady as his daughter. I had not ſeen Miſs Manners ſince her childhood, ſhe having, as you know, been bred up with an aunt in the country, and really could not but feel ſome

degree of ſurpriſe, at beholding her now in the full bloom of beauty, adorned with all the graces of a finiſhed education. I congratulated the good old gentleman on the return of his daughter to town, as on the acquiſition thereby accruing to his domeſtic happineſs, which he politely returned, by ſaying that he expected me to come to his houſe as often as poſſible, in order to render it as cheerful as might be to her, and, added he, bring your friend alſo. William, I could perceive, was by no means diſpleaſed to be included in the invitation, which he has ſince ſo well improved on, as

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to ſpend the grateſt part of his time there. In ſhort, the accompliſhments of Charlotte have made a deep impreſſion on his heart, and, as ſhe is a woman of an excellent underſtanding, it is impoſſible but her converſation muſt have a happy effect on the character of her lover: Indeed he becomes every hour more the very perſon I could wiſh him to be, and, if I am not miſtaken, has gained conſiderable ground in the lady's affections; but alas, Sir, circumſtanced as he now is, what hopes can be rationally entertained of his ſucceſs. The reflection gives me real concern, and there-

fore

fore I ſhall now have recourſe to thoſe good offices, which both you and my mother are ever ready to beſtow on thoſe who need them. Your mediation is what I requeſt in his behalf with his family—ſuch remonſtrances as your benevolence will ſuggeſt on the occaſion, cannot ſurely be ineffectual—I perſuade myſelf they will be prevailed on to put him in a condition of life more worthy, both their own reputation, and the favour of Miſs Manners.

But now, moſt honoured Sir, and Madam, having thus expreſſed my ſolicitude in behalf of

my friend, ſhall I be permitted to addreſs you on a ſubject reſpecting myſelf? which, though it has long lain near my heart, I have not yet dared to diſcloſe to you. I remember, ſoon after my arrival at Roſe-Hill, you tenderly aſked if I had not yet a wiſh of preſenting you with a daughter-in-law—I anſwered, with truth, that I had not yet ſeen the lady, to the honour of whoſe hand I aſpired: But what the populous town could not afford, your retirement did—it was there I beheld Julia Seaforth! To the kind boſoms of an indulgent father and mother I entruſt the ſecret of my heart,

heart, which as ſuch muſt yet remain there, if not agreeable to their choice, whoſe happineſs is, and ever muſt be, the primary conſideration of

Their grateful and affectionate

FRANCIS HANBURY.

LETTER IX.

MR. and Mrs. Hanbury having maturely weighed the contents of their ſon's letter, became unanimous in thoſe ſentiments which the following epiſtle will expreſs:

" The penchant, my dear Frank, which the latter part of your letter apprizes us of, is not the mighty ſecret, either with your

your mother or me, which you imagined. We were no dull obſervers of your growing tenderneſs for Julia Seaforth, nor of her's for you, for we are convinced the attachment is mutual; and ſo fully are we convinced of the ſweetneſs of her temper, and the amiable biaſs of her character in general, as to believe her a very proper object of your choice, were ſhe of any other family in the world than the one ſhe is, which I verily believe to be the moſt worthleſs of any in the kingdom, and the laſt with which a man, who ſeeks domeſtic happineſs, ought to form alliance.

There is another circumſtance which, with moſt fathers, would furniſh an inſurmountable objection—I mean the deficiency of fortune—for to my knowledge Mr. Seaforth cannot give his daughter a ſhilling. But I value myſelf, Frank, in thinking, in many reſpects, differently to the greater part of mankind, and therefore do aſſure you that this conſideration is with me no obſtacle. You are yourſelf in a lucrative line of life, ſufficient to ſupport a family in a genteel ſtyle; and, at my death, will inherit a larger fortune than I truſt you will think neceſſary to your own

uſe

uſe alone; there can then be no reaſon why your choice of a wife ſhould be directed by pecuniary views—you are to ſeek a portion *in* a wife, for there is not the ſmalleſt neceſſity for your ſeeking it *with* her. In Julia Seaforth, I freely confeſs, you might expect to meet with a woman calculated to form your conjugal felicity; ſhe has a ſolidity of underſtanding far beyond her years, together with great ſweetneſs of temper, ingenuity, and modeſty; her character, however, may be ſaid to be yet unformed, for I by no means ſuppoſe the habits of thinking ſhe may have acquired at the

Hall, will form any part of it, ſhould ſhe be ſo happy as to be united to a man of ſenſe, tenderneſs, and virtue; in whoſe power it certainly will be to give a proper turn to her future conduct and opinions. Having allowed thus much, my ſon, I muſt leave the reſt to your own reflections, ſatisfied that you are not one of thoſe romantic people, who permit their paſſions to direct their reaſon: And therefore, if after the mature conſideration, which I perſuade myſelf you will beſtow on the ſubject, you ſhall find this alliance neceſſary to your happineſs, you have my full conſent,

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in which alſo is included that of your mother, to offer the following propoſals to Mr. Seaforth, which I cannot ſuppoſe he will heſitate a moment in accepting, viz.

Previous to your marriage, I purpoſe to reſign my Kentiſh Eſtate, which produces the yearly income of five hundred and fifty pounds, to be ſettled on your wife as a jointure, in caſe ſhe ſurvives you, with full power to bequeath it to ſuch of her offſpring, by the marriage, as ſhe ſhall chuſe—this clauſe I would have inſerted in order to ſecure her that proper reſpect from her children, which

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an entailed Eſtate too often prevents. Your houſe in town, carriage, and furniture, to be ſettled on the ſame conditions. The reſt of my fortune will, I hope, be enjoyed by you, or your iſſue, in due order of time. I ſhall alſo ſettle on her the annual ſum of two hundred pounds, by way of pin money; not with a view of rendering her independent of her huſband, but to enable her to exerciſe that generoſity, which I know to be inherent to her diſpoſition.

Thus, Frank, I have, I believe, fully adjuſted what concerns yourſelf.

yourſelf. I ſhall now proceed to the affairs of your friend William, your ſolicitude in whoſe behalf does honour to the feelings we are proud to know you poſſeſs, but I am obliged to ſay I have been an unſucceſsful negociator. I went to the Hall full of ſpirits, not at all doubting but my intelligence would have been received with as much ſatisfaction as I myſelf ſhould have felt on a like occaſion; for tho' the moral principles of that family are not in a very flouriſhing ſtate, I ſuppoſed the ſocial feelings could not be utterly extinct. Mr. Seaforth, ſtarting from a doſe at my entrance, looked

looked a little queerly, which I naturally placed to the account of my late refuſal in the electioneering affair; but on my ſaying I had brought him ſome pleaſing news, his aſpect brightened up, and he civilly led me to a chair. What he expected me to ſay I know not, but on my informing him I had received tidings of his younger ſon, his countenance reverted to its former gloom: I proceeded, however, to acquaint him with the particulars of your diſcovery, and then added, "I preſume, Sir, you will now determine to eſtabliſh the young gentleman creditably in the military line."

"Sir,

"Sir, (replied he angrily) is it thus you adviſe me to reward an idle undutiful child, who has diſgraced his pedigree, and brought diſcredit on a family, whoſe name was never mentioned but with reverence? A vile dog, to ſneak out of my houſe, like a thief, and mix himſelf with the vulgar herd. Sir, I am certain I could never endure the ſight of him, after ſo infamous a ſtep—A fellow that has carried a knapſack!"

"You poſitively then will do nothing for him?"

"Nothing at all, Mr. Hanbury,

bury, I aſſure you. I have other children, who have never diſgraced me—ought I to injure them in order to ſupport an idle vagabond, who is a ſcandal to the name of Seaforth?"

"But what is this poor youth to do then, if you think yourſelf juſtified, Sir, in ſo unnatural a reſolution?"

"What he can, neighbour Hanbury. I diſown him, and if ever he approaches theſe doors, he will find them ſhut againſt him, I promiſe you."

"But

"But have you conſidered, Mr. Seaforth, that by thus rigorouſly puniſhing, what at moſt can only be termed juvenile indiſcretion, you will moſt likely drive a child to actual vice—to infamy—to perdition?"

"Sir, Sir,—can any one ſay I have driven him to all this? Has he not obſtinately run into the very path of ruin? Did I turn him out of doors?—No, no, neighbour Hanbury, the world can't ſay I did."

It was no difficult thing, my dear Frank, to ſee that the conduct

duct of this unnatural parent had more in it of a diabolical policy, than real reſentment. Perceiving all my arguments would be loſt, on a mind harrowed up by every ſordid principle, I left him, with a look of contempt, and immediately conſulted with your mother on the proper ſteps to be taken reſpecting this unfortunate young man. We are both of opinion, that the only thing to be done is to purchaſe him a Commiſſion: This I would have you to do as ſoon as poſſible, and place the expence to my account, for though I know your own generoſity would readily prompt you in this affair,

affair, I cannot think you ought to take ſo large a ſum as would be requiſite out of trade. For my part I would enjoy the reward of a long and cloſe attention to buſineſs, by devoting the fortune ſo acquired to the nobleſt of purpoſes—that of benevolence: And what more properly falls under that deſcription than the enabling a youg man to paſs through life with credit and honour, whom his parents had cruelly devoted to infamy and deſtruction? Believe me, Frank, while I am thus annually appropriating the ſurplus of an ample fortune, it is a rich ſource of ſatisfaction to me, to

reflect that I have a ſon animated by the ſame ſoul, and who will one day have it in his power to crown a youth of induſtry, by an old age of benevolence. Did I ſuppoſe you capable of indulging the ſordid principle of avarice, I ſhould not ſubſcribe myſelf, as now I do.

Your truly affectionate Father.

LETTER X.

TENDERLY as Frank Hanbury was attached to Julia Seaforth, it is probable that he would not, at this particular period, have diſcloſed his paſſion, had he not been inſtigated by ſome hints, which William, in the ardour of friendſhip, had dropped, reſpecting the ſtate of his ſiſter's affections, and the extatic idea of being

beloved, muſt have been ſufficient to excite the alacrity of a leſs ſanguine lover, than was this young gentleman. The amiable deference he had paid to parental opinion, in an affair of ſo tender a nature, was now amply rewarded, by the kind conceſſions contained in his father's letter; nor will it appear at all extraordinary, if the only objection which Mr. Hanbury had expreſſed to the alliance, that of family, ſhould have appeared of little moment, when put in competition with the perſonal merits of the lady herſelf. To ſay the truth, tho' Mr. Hanbury had all the reaſon in the world, to

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rely on the principles and diſcretion of his ſon, it may be doubted, whether it were a fair trial to refer the caſe ſo deciſively to him on the preſent occaſion, ſince the heart of a man in love is at all times two to one againſt his judgment. We ſhall not therefore be ſurpriſed that Frank ſhould avail himſelf of the encouragement his father had unqueſtionably given to his paſſion, by ſhortly after addreſſing Mr. Seaforth on the ſubject.

Nothing could be more agreeable to William Seaforth than the proſpect of ſuch an union. His

fervent attachment to Julia led him to believe, that no man in the world, beſides Frank, could poſſibly deſerve her; nor did he once heſitate in concluding, that the great advantages of ſuch a match to his family, muſt ſuperſede every objection which their prejudices might otherwiſe ſuggeſt. Theſe reflections were ſo agreeable to his mind, that they alleviated, in ſome degree, the painful conſciouſneſs of his own ſituation; for though his friend, in relating the conduct of Mr. Seaforth, had ſoftened matters as much as poſſible, he could not but perceive himſelf abandoned

doned to miſery, and deſtitute of hope. It was not long, however, before Frank Hanbury had compleatly executed the plan which his father had recommended, and taking from his pocket the Commiſſion he had actually purchaſed, preſented it to William, ſaying at the ſame time,—"I cannot conceal from you, my dear Seaforth, your utter excluſion from your own family, but here is your paſſport to glory and honour. Your country becomes henceforth your home—the brave and virtuous your relations and friends."

An inſtance of liberality and

friendſhip, ſo little expected, drew the big drops of grateful emotion from the eyes of Seaforth—he could not utter his feelings, and to prevent an attempt at ſo doing, the other haſtily withdrew. The regiment to which this young gentleman now belonged, was ſoon after ordered to Ireland. He had continued to viſit the Manners's, not without making rapid, though ſecret, advances in the tender regards of Charlotte, and he now felt the idea of being ſeparated from her inflicting a ſevere pang. To have been aſſured of her tenderneſs before his departure, would have been bliſs unutterable,

unutterable, but this he dared not aſk, nor even to reveal the flame which glowed within his own breaſt. Some time before ſuch delicate timidity could have had no exiſtence in his character, but that was now become regenerate in every ſenſe of the word—new views had opened to his mind—new ſentiments animated his ſoul, and he who formerly would have ſpurned the thought of a match with a tradeſman's daughter, now would have thought himſelf a villain had he endeavoured to ſeduce the affections of Charlotte Manners, for whom he could not but ſuppoſe her father had much ſuperior views.

views. The period therefore when his family pronounced him a diſgrace to it, was that in which he was become capable of reflecting the greateſt honour thereon.

" Soon after Seaforth had embarked for Ireland, Frank received an anſwer to that letter which had really afforded Mr. Seaforth a very ſenſible pleaſure. His lady indeed, without whoſe advice he ſeldom took any reſolution, was not at home, but the nature of the affair convinced him ſhe would concur in the propoſal as readily as he felt himſelf inclined to do—to marry his daughter, without any expence

expence on his part, into a family ſo immenſely rich as that of the Hanburys, was beyond whatever avarice itſelf could have hoped, and he therefore determined on giving every encouragement to the ſcheme—ſo far he acted like a perſon of common ſenſe, but here a narrow policy officiouſly intruded, and ſuggeſted a few conſiderations. It was evident the Hanburys had the match greatly at heart, or certainly the old gentleman would not have made ſo large a conceſſion in Julia's behalf, and that without even aſking any thing by way of portion with her—might not the advantage of

his family in general be ſecured by a ſtep which doubtleſs would derogate ſomething from the dignity of it?—it might. Under the influence therefore of ſuch ſagacious conſiderations, he diſpatched the following epiſtle to Mr. Frank Hanbury, not at all doubting but both he and his father were in a humour to grant whatever he ſhould have the modeſty to require:

" Sir,

" I have received your letter, and think it merits ſome acknowledgement. My daughter is doubtleſs a fine young woman, and might

might think herſelf entitled to match with a peer of the realm; nevertheleſs I have a high eſteem of your character, which I aſſure you is the only motive which induces me to treat your propoſal with any degree of attention, for the Seaforths, Sir, are not a family of yeſterday. Our pedigree reaches as far back as the conqueſt, for you muſt know (as I ſuppoſe you are not much verſed in thoſe things) that my illuſtrious anceſtor had the honour of drawing a thorn out of the great toe of William the Conqueror, for which important ſervice his Majeſty created him Baron Seaforth, with a grant

a grant of lands annexed. Sir, there is not a family of higher antiquity in the three kingdoms, and what is more ſingular, no branch of it, either in a direct or collateral line, has ever diſhonoured it by connexions with tradeſpeople, or the vulgar of any denomination. You muſt be ſenſible therefore, that your propoſal is highly improper to be acceded to; but as I ſaid before, in regard to your great merit, I will condeſcend ſo far as to permit a daughter of our ancient houſe to become your wife, on condition of your agreeing to the following articles:

First,

Firſt, "You ſhall relinquiſh your preſent mode of life, as a merchant, and purchaſe, or build, a handſome houſe, for my daughter to reſide in.

Secondly, "The ſum of ten thouſand pounds ſhall be depoſited in the hands of my eldeſt ſon, Edric Seaforth, as a ſecurity for your honourable treatment of his ſiſter.

Thirdly, "Your equipage, houſehold arrangements, and expences, to be regulated by the honourable Mrs. Seaforth, who, by that means, ſhall be enabled duly

duly to preſerve the dignity of the family.

Fouthly, "The education of your children, by the marriage, to be entruſted ſolely to the care of the aforeſaid honourable Mrs. Seaforth; and, in caſe of her death, the charge ſhall devolve on Edric Seaforth, in order to prevent them from imbibing low or plebeian ideas.

Fifth and laſtly, "The whole landed property now belonging to your father, Mr. Hanbury, ſen. to be ſettled on my daughter, and her heirs; and in default of ſuch

iſſue,

iſſue, it ſhall devolve on the iſſue of Edric Seaforth.

"Theſe are the terms, Sir, on which a daughter of the Seaforth family can become your wife; in compliance with which you are at liberty to addreſs her. Mean time I am, &c. &c.

"BERTRAND SEAFORTH."

It is eaſy to imagine the ſenſations with which Frank Hanbury read this curious epiſtle—aſtoniſhment and indignation took poſſeſſion of his ſoul. He loved

Julia with an ardour and ſincerity which noble minds alone are capable of, but he was at the ſame time a young man of great ſenſe and ſpirit. The conduct of Mr. Seaforth ſo forcibly expreſſed an artful deſign of impoſing on the generoſity of Mr. Hanbury, ſenior, that the filial emotions of a ſon, for ſome moments obliterated thoſe of the lover—thoſe articles which concerned merely the regulation of domeſtic affairs, he treated with contempt; but thoſe which intimated the reſtriction of his father's fortune, irritated his reſentment in the higheſt degree. "Does the ſordid man (cried he)

ſuppoſe me capable even of conſenting that the beſt of parents ſhould ſubmit to unworthy conditions, for any gratification of mine?—Periſh the baſe idea! Oh, Julia, Julia, my felicity indeed depends on thee; yet could I purchaſe it by the mean conceſſions here required, I were indeed unworthy your regard." Under the influence of theſe impreſſions, he reſolved to forget her for ever, and bitterly regretted her relation to a perſon of ſuch ſordid principles. He now retired to bed, but certainly not to ſleep—of a temper naturally ſanguine, he had allowed himſelf to indulge the moſt deli-

cious proſpects, which were now totally deſtroyed, by a ſtroke the fartheſt in the world from probability. His paſſion for the young lady was no leſs lively than tender, what then muſt have been the ſtruggles of his generous boſom, when reaſon, honour, and every prudential conſideration, urged the neceſſity of ſuppreſſing it. The more he reflected, the ſtronger were his convictions, till at length he was clearly perſuaded of the propriety of the only objection which his father had expreſſed to the match, and plainly ſaw that his own happineſs muſt have been totally incompatible with any

connexion

connexion with his wife's relations. In fine, after ſeveral hours ſpent in thoſe painful reflections, he aroſe with the firſt dawn of day, determined, by an extraordinary application to buſineſs, to baniſh, if poſſible, every ſoft emotion; at leaſt he was reſolved to think no more of the affair, unleſs, what was extremely improbable, he ſhould be enabled to purſue it more conſiſtently with that proper ſpirit, which every man of ſenſe does, or may be expected to exert, in matters ſo nearly connected with domeſtic happineſs, and the welfare of his poſterity.

END OF VOL. I.

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